



# Speaking of Students

American Academy of Religion

In This Issue

## 2014 ANNUAL MEETING CALLS FOR PROPOSALS

### Student Lounge Workshop Leaders

The Graduate Student Committee invites you to share your hard-earned wisdom with students in the Student Lounge Roundtable series. We are looking for individuals who will be responsible for leading an hour-long conversation or workshop about a practical dimension of graduate studies. A variety of formats are welcome. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Academic employment
- Nontraditional or alternative academic employment
- Identity politics (in graduate school, on the job market, in teaching or research, etc.)
- Networking
- Mentoring
- Publishing
- Grant writing
- CVs
- Presenting research to the public
- Teaching (online teaching, teaching portfolios, syllabus design, teaching technology, etc.)
- Time management
- Work-life balance
- Sustainability in relation to graduate life, teaching, research, etc.

### Table of Contents

1. [Annual Meeting Call for Papers](#)
2. [Regional News](#)
3. [Graduate Student Conference](#)
4. [Reflection on the 2013 Annual Meeting](#)
5. [Regional Student Facebook Pages](#)
6. [AAR Student Facebook](#)

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Please send a 150-word proposal and a CV to [Daniel Cochran](#) by **March 1**,

**2014.** Please indicate if you are willing to copresent if your topic aligns with another proposal. Roundtable time slots are flexible. **This does not count towards your two-proposal submission limit within the PAPERS system.**

### **Leadership Development Series**

The Graduate Student Committee invites paper or workshop proposals that explore leadership within the fields of religious studies and theological studies. We are particularly interested in the intersection between leadership development and graduate students. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Innovative forms of academic leadership for the New Academy
- Leadership training within graduate school
- Developing leadership through the mentoring relationship
- Marketing leadership skills on the academic job market
- Leadership as a public scholar
- Academic leadership and identity politics
- Ethical considerations of leadership development
- Opportunities and barriers for learning academic leadership

Please send a 150-word proposal and a CV to AAR student director [Kristy Slominski](#) by **March 1, 2014. This does not count towards your two-proposal submission limit within the PAPERS system.**

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### **REGIONAL NEWS FOR STUDENTS**

#### **Open Positions for Regional Student Directors**

Each AAR region has an elected student director who serves as a member of the region's Board of Directors and as a member of the national AAR Graduate Student Committee. The student director must remain a student at a college or university within the Region during the two-year term, which begins at the time of their regional election. Regional student directors are responsible for representing AAR student concerns and helping to coordinate student involvement and programs on the regional and national level. This includes events planned by the Graduate Student Committee for the Annual Meeting.

The following regions will be electing new regional student directors at their upcoming meetings:

- Mid-Atlantic Region
- Pacific Northwest Region

Rocky Mountains-Great Plans Region

- Southeast Region (part of SECSOR)
- Southwest Region (part of SWCRS)
- Western Region

The election procedures vary by region, so please contact the current student director of that region for further details. Their contact information is available on the [AAR Graduate Student Committee page](#). You can also contact Kristy Slominski, the current national student director and chair of the Graduate Student Committee at [slominski@umail.ucsb.edu](mailto:slominski@umail.ucsb.edu).

### **Regional Meeting Dates and Locations**

The annual season of regional meetings is quickly approaching. Regional meetings provide great opportunities to present papers, learn about cutting-edge research, and meet fellow scholars in the field. Consider attending one (or more) of these excellent events now, and check out their events and awards for students! For more information, visit the [AAR Regional Meeting page](#).

#### **March 7–9, Mid-Atlantic**

##### **Mount Saint Mary College, Newburgh, New York**

The executive committee of the Mid-Atlantic Region will once again award the Robert F. Streetman Prize to the best student paper presented by a regional member. The committee will also award the Kate Connelly-Weinert Prize to the most innovative proposal for a group session or panel dealing with peace issues and/or women's studies.

#### **March 7–9, Southeast (SECSOR)**

##### **Marriott Century Center, Atlanta, Georgia**

All graduate students are invited to attend the Graduate Student Reception and Roundtable Saturday night, from 6:00–7:00 pm. Laura Alexander (University of Virginia) and Matthew Jantzen (Duke University) will be hosting a roundtable discussion on "Job Market Realities, Strategies, and Opportunities." Come join us for a discussion of relevance and interest to all graduate students. Winners of the Outstanding Graduate Student Paper Awards will be announced at the plenary session on Friday night. We will also be electing a new student director at the business meeting of the AAR/SE, so be sure to attend to cast your vote.

#### **March 7–9, Southwest (SWCRS)**

##### **Marriott Hotel, DFW Airport, Irving, Texas**

On Saturday, March 9 from 12:00–1:20 pm there will be a women's

lunch hour for SWCRS attendees: We invite women graduate students, faculty, and independent scholars for this chance to meet other women scholars in biblical studies, archaeology and religion, and share your experiences and concerns. Also be sure to attend our plenary address on "Religion, Politics and the Public Square: Desecularization and the Academy" by John Esposito of Georgetown University.

### **March 7–9, Western**

#### **Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, California**

Check out the two sessions planned by the Graduate Student Professional Development Unit, as well as our plenary speaker, Rosemary Radford Ruether. We also host a competition for the best student paper, as well as the best paper submitted by an independent scholar. Explore [our new website](#) for additional information about student resources.

### **March 29–30, Rocky Mountain-Great Plains**

#### **University of Denver, Denver, Colorado**

There is a preconference professional development session and reception on Friday, March 28. The student development session, titled "Audience, Function and Performance: The Conference Paper Genre" is scheduled from 4:00–5:30 pm, and will be followed by a reception. See the [meeting website](#) for more information.

### **April 4–5, Upper Midwest**

#### **Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota**

We have planned a graduate student symposium, with a panel of professors to discuss aspects of graduate student training and the job market, as well as a student social event. Keep an eye on our regional Facebook page for further details!

### **April 4–5, Midwest**

#### **Ohio Northern University, Ada, Ohio**

The Midwest region has paper competitions for the best graduate student and undergraduate student papers, as well as for the best paper in the area of religion, ecology, and sustainability. Our plenary speaker will be current AAR president and professor at Northwestern University Laurie Zoloth, who will speak on "The Duties of Abundance: Religion and the Ethics of Ordinary Life in a Time of Radical Climate Change."

### **April 26, New England-Maritimes**

#### **Boston College, Brighton, Massachusetts**

To help foster graduate student participation, the New England-Maritimes Region will again bestow the NEMAAR Graduate Student

Awards for Excellence for the three best student papers presented at the conference by a NEMAAR regional member. Those interested in applying should submit their entire papers by March 24th to the appropriate section chair(s) and clearly indicate on the submission sheet that they are submitting the paper for award consideration. Papers should be 5,000–7,000 words, 12-point font and double-spaced, and formatted. You are required to be registered for the conference in order to be considered for the awards and must be present to accept the award. Please contact Dr. Donna Seamone at [donna.seamone@acadiu.ca](mailto:donna.seamone@acadiu.ca) with any questions about this process.

**May 2–4, Eastern International**

**Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York**

We now have a new website, which contains further information about the region and the upcoming conference: [www.eiraar.net](http://www.eiraar.net).

**May 9–11, Pacific Northwest**

**University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, Canada**

Details about our student paper competition are available at <http://pnw-aarsbl.org/student-paper-competition/>.

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**REMIXING RELIGION GRADUATE STUDENT CONFERENCE**

**"Remixing Religion: New Models for the Study of Religious Synthesis"  
An Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Conference**

University of Texas at Austin, Department of Religious Studies  
Friday, April 4, 2014 9:00 AM

The keynote speakers for this conference are: David Frankfurter, professor of religion and Aurelio Chair in the Appreciation of Scripture at Boston University, and Judith Weisenfeld, professor of religion at Princeton University. For more information, [see the website](#).

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**A REFLECTION FROM THE 2013 ANNUAL MEETING**

by Natalya Cherry, Southern Methodist University

As a new member of AAR, I was surprised how much the Annual Meeting can be characterized by competition. It's not a complaint, just an observation that the sheer numbers involved automatically generate competition. For example, the large number of members (of AAR and SBL together) in attendance dwarfs the number of spots in programs, fellowships, and jobs for which one might be interviewing during the

meeting. The greatest competition, however, is a sign of health: the competition for our time and attention!

Not a single all-nighter that I may or may not have had to pull last semester was as exhausting as the experience of trying to make it to all of the panels, groups, papers, plenaries, lunches, dinners, receptions, and of course, Student Lounge roundtables, etc., and then to process everything being presented, shared, taught in each session. At any given time I could have been equally happy to be in three different places and confess that on at least one day, I allowed the determining factor to be whether the session required me to leave the building and stalk down the street in that bitter wind.

When I told Robert Puckett, the AAR Director of Meetings, that I did not envy his role of orchestrating such an enormous event at the new members' breakfast, I had yet to experience most of this competition that so confirmed my observation! Most useful to me at this point in my degree and career was the first student roundtable I attended, "Digital Tools for Dissertation Writers" with Jennifer Adler, though I enjoyed everything that followed. The only constructive suggestion I can offer is for us who are student members. It seems important to consider how to overcome the notion expressed by student members with whom I spoke in the Convention Center hallway (who had yet to try to locate said lounge), that since we are students for such a brief percentage of our career, it is not the best use of our Annual Meeting time— with all these events competing for it— to spend it among fellow students in the meetings, lounge, or roundtables. I respectfully and strenuously disagree.

Many thanks to former AAR student director, Elonda Clay, for her leadership and for encouraging me to share this reflection, and best wishes to Kristy Slominski as she assumes our top student leadership role.

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### **Regional Student Facebook Pages**

If you haven't done so already, stay connected with the students in your region by "liking" their facebook page.

[Student Members of the AAR EIR](#)

[Student Members of the AAR Pacific Northwest Region](#)

[Student Members of the AAR and SBL Rocky Mountain-Great Plains Region](#)

[Student Members of the AAR Southeast Region](#)

[Student Members of the AAR Upper Midwest Region](#)

[Student Members of the AAR Western Region](#)

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### **AAR STUDENT FACEBOOK GROUP**

Just a reminder that the [Student Members and Friends of the American Academy of Religion Facebook](#) is available for all members and friends of the AAR. Members have posted calls for papers, job listings, requests for more information, forthcoming publications, and more. Please join us on Facebook and keep up with graduate student events, news, opportunities, conversations, and useful resources. Free registration with [Facebook](#) required.

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